

capture images at a rate substantially below the rate at which the strobe flash [(16,116)] is pulsed.

2. A camera [(2,102)] as claimed in [any preceding] claim 1, in which the pulse circuitry [(160)] is arranged to ramp up [(45)] the perceived intensity of the steady illumination prior to the capture of the image, and/or to ramp down [(49)] said intensity after capture of the image.

3. A camera [(2,102)] as claimed in Claim 2, in which the ramp up [(45)] and/or ramp down [(49)] of the perceived intensity of the steady illumination takes place over at least 0.25 second.

4. A camera [(2,102)] as claimed in Claim 2 [or Claim 3], in which the ramp up [(45)] and/or ramp down [(49)] of the perceived intensity of the steady illumination takes place over less than 1 second.

5. A camera [(2,102)] as claimed in [any preceding] claim 1, in which the rate at which the strobe flash [(16,116)] is pulsed [(75)] is at least 50 Hz.

6. A camera [(2,102)] as claimed in [any preceding] claim 1 in which the rate at which the strobe flash [(16,116)] is pulsed [(75)] is at least 10 times higher than the image capture rate.

7. A camera [(2,102)] as claimed in [any preceding] claim 1, in which the detector for image capture [means] is an electronic detector [(52)] array, the shutter [means] comprising electronic control circuitry [(104)] to synchronise the capture of an image by the detector array [(52)] with the strobe flash [(16,116)].

8. A camera [(102)] as claimed in Claim 7, in which the camera [(102)] includes an actuator [(24)] to scan [(26,30)] the field of view [(18,118)] of the objective lens [(14,114)] in the object plane [(8)] as the control circuitry [(104)] captures images of different fields of view [(118)].

9. A camera [(102)] as claimed in Claim 8, in which the actuator [(24)] scans the field of view [(118)] of the objective lens [(114)] continuously as the control circuitry [(104)] captures images of different fields of view [(118)].

10. A camera [(2)] as claimed in [any preceding] claim 1, in which the camera is a hand-held camera [(2)].

11. A document scanning system [(101)] comprising a camera [(102)], the camera [being as claimed in Claim 8 or Claim 9] comprising an electronic detector array for image capture, an objective lens with a field of view to image optical radiation from an object plane onto the electronic detector array, a strobe flash for illuminating the object plane, electronic pulse circuitry to pulse the strobe flash at a rate which is sufficiently quick that the illumination appears to a user of the camera to be substantially steady owing to persistence of vision, and a shutter comprising electronic control circuitry to synchronise the capture of an image by the detector array with the strobe flash, each image being captured with at least one pulse from the strobe flash, wherein the shutter is adapted to capture images at a rate substantially below the rate at which the strobe flash is pulsed, the camera further including an actuator to scan the field of view of the objective lens in the object plane as the control circuitry captures images of different fields of view; the document scanning system further comprising [, and] a mount [(110)] by which the camera [(102)] may be positioned to image onto the electronic detector array[(52)] a portion of a document [(6)] in the object plane [(8)], wherein the actuator [(24)] is operable to scan [(26,30)] the field of view [(118)] of the objective lens [(114)] as the control circuitry [(104)] captures images of different portions of the document [(6)].

12. A document imaging system [(101)] as claimed in Claim 11, in which the system comprises [means (104)] a processor adapted to execute a stitching algorithm by which images captured from adjacent or overlapping fields of view [(118)] can be joined into a composite image of the adjacent or overlapping fields [(118)].

13. A method of imaging a document using a camera [(102)], the camera being as claimed in Claim 8 or Claim 9,] comprising an electronic detector array for image capture, an objective lens with a field of view to image optical radiation from an

object plane onto the electronic detector array, a strobe flash for illuminating the object plane, electronic pulse circuitry to pulse the strobe flash at a rate which is sufficiently quick that the illumination appears to a user of the camera to be substantially steady owing to persistence of vision, and a shutter comprising electronic control circuitry to synchronise the capture of an image by the detector array with the strobe flash, each image being captured with at least one pulse from the strobe flash, wherein the shutter is adapted to capture images at a rate substantially below the rate at which the strobe flash is pulsed, the camera further including an actuator to scan the field of view of the objective lens in the object plane as the control circuitry captures images of different fields of view;

[characterised in that] wherein the method comprises the steps of:

- a) aiming the camera [(102)] at a document [(6)] in the object plane [(8)] so that a portion of the document [(6)] falls within the field of view [(118)]; and
- b) using the actuator [(24)] to scan [(26,30)] the field of view [(118)] of the objective lens [(114)] as the control circuitry [(104)] captures images of different portions of the document [(6)].

14. A method of scanning a document using a document scanning system [(101)], the document scanning system [being as claimed in Claim 10 or Claim 11, ] comprising a camera, the camera comprising an electronic detector array for image capture, an objective lens with a field of view to image optical radiation from an object plane onto the electronic detector array, a strobe flash for illuminating the object plane, electronic pulse circuitry to pulse the strobe flash at a rate which is sufficiently quick that the illumination appears to a user of the camera to be substantially steady owing to persistence of vision, and a shutter comprising electronic control circuitry to synchronise the capture of an image by the detector array with the strobe flash, each image being captured with at least one pulse from the strobe flash, wherein the shutter is adapted to capture images at a rate substantially below the rate at which the strobe flash is pulsed, the camera further including an actuator to scan the field of view of the objective lens in the object plane as the control circuitry captures images of different fields of view; the document scanning

system further comprising a mount by which the camera may be positioned to image onto the electronic detector array a portion of a document in the object plane, wherein the actuator is operable to scan the field of view of the objective lens as the control circuitry captures images of different portions of the document

[characterised in that] wherein the method comprises the steps of:

[c)] a) mounting [(110)] the camera [(102)] to image onto the detector [(52)] a portion of a document [(6)] in the object plane [(8)]; and

[d)] b) using the actuator [(24)] to scan [(26,30)] the field of view [(118)] of the objective lens [(114)] as the control circuitry [(104)] captures images of different portions of the document [(6)].

15. A method of scanning a document as claimed in Claim 14 [when appendant from Claim 12] wherein the document scanning system further comprises a processor adapted to execute a stitching algorithm by which images captured from adjacent or overlapping fields of view can be joined into a composite image of the adjacent or overlapping fields, in which the method comprises after step [d)] b) the step of:

[e)] c) joining images captured from adjacent or overlapping fields of view [(118)] into a composite image of the document.